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Dear Senator Proxmire:

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July 10, 1978

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Thank you for your letter of June 27 concerning the human rights situation in Argentina.

The Department is deeply concerned about human rights in Argentina. President Carter discussed this issue with Argentine President Videla in September and Secretary Vance raised this question when he visited Argentina in November 1977. Recently, Under Secretary for Political Affairs Newsom visited Argentina and again made known our concern over human rights, as have Assistant Secretaries Terence Todman and Patricia Derian.

uuu  
→ In addition, both our Embassy and the Department are in frequent contact with officials of the Argentine Government on this issue. Inquiries on hundreds of cases of disappeared and detained people have been presented by our Embassy to the Argentine Government.

uuu Moreover, the U.S. has taken a number of measures to make it very clear to the Argentines how strongly we feel about human rights. Since October 1977, most Argentine arms requests have been held back, grant military training has not been provided, F.M.S. credits have not been made available, negative votes have been cast on Argentine loan requests in international financial institutions and approval of Export-Import Bank transactions for Argentina are currently being held back.

The Argentines are very much aware of the importance which the U.S. attaches to human rights. We will continue to press for improvements in the situation there.

Sincerely,

Douglas J. Bennet, Jr.  
Assistant Secretary  
for Congressional Relations

Enclosure:  
Correspondence returned.

The Honorable  
William Proxmire,  
United States Senate.

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